SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

This Amendment adds new Claims 14-18. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support for Claim 14 is found in the specification at least at page 3, lines 21-23. Support for Claims 15-16 is found in the specification at least at page 7, lines 3-4 and 17-18. Support for Claims 17-18 is found in the specification at least at page 7, lines 18-20. No new matter would be introduced by entry of these amendments.

Upon entry of these amendments, Claims 1-3 and 5-18 will be pending in this application. Claims 1 and 11 are independent.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing and reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, in light of the remarks that follow.

The present invention provides a thermoplastic resin composition that has excellent reflectance and thermal stability in residence during molding into large products. Specification at page 2, lines 23-25. The thermoplastic resin composition comprises specific amounts of a thermoplastic resin and coated titanium oxide particles. The thermoplastic resin contains a polycarbonate-type resin. The coated titanium oxide particles comprise titanium oxide whose surface is coated with a hydrous oxide and/or an oxide of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of aluminum, silicon, zirconium, tin, cerium, titanium and zinc. Specification at page 2, line 22 to page 3, line 3. The coated titanium oxide particles contain only small amounts of metal cations that can be extracted to water. Specification at page 3, lines 4-10.

> Usually, **titanium oxide particles coated with a metal hydrous oxide and/or a metal oxide** described above and **washed with water** are ***commercially available***. However, probably because the ***washing level is not high***, **alkali metals and alkaline-earth metals** generated secondarily during a coating step ***remain***, and alkali metal cations and/or alkaline-earth metal cations (hereinafter, may be called as metal cations) that are mainly originated from Na and K are attached to the surface etc. of the titanium oxide particles. ... Titanium oxide particles used in the present invention should have 120 mass ppm or less of the sum of metal cations (from Li, Na, K, Mg, and Ca) that are extracted to pure water as determined by ion chromatography analysis. **If the total amount of the metal cations extracted to pure water is more than 120 mass ppm, *thermal stability* in residence during molding of the composition *lowers substantially***, wherein the thermoplastic resin (especially polycarbonate) and titanium oxide particles are the main ingredients. The total amount of metal cations extracted to pure water is preferably 70 mass ppm or less, and in particular preferably 40 mass ppm or less. Specification at page 7, line 25 to page 8, line 16 (emphasis added).

To reduce the amount of alkali metal cations and alkaline-earth metal cations that can be extracted from the coated titanium oxide particles to water to a total amount of 120 mass ppm or lower, the present invention cleans the coated titanium oxide particles with pure water using a **filtrating/cleaning operation** that is **repeated *five times***. Specification at page 15, lines 17-18; Examples 1-8.

Claims 1-3 and 6-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,956,073 ("Takagi"). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Takagi.

Takagi discloses a flame-retardant resin composition that can contain titanium-dioxide as a pigment. Takagi at column 1, lines 17-18. Takagi discloses a process for washing Al_2O_3 coated TiO_2:

> The Al_2O_3 surface-treating agent can be coated on TiO_2 surface by any one of generally employed methods. For example, the surface-coated titanium dioxide can be prepared by the following steps (1) to (8). That is, the method includes the steps of (1) preparing an aqueous slurry of untreated TiO_2 after dry pulverization, (2) wet-pulverizing said slurry to form fine particles, (3) collecting the fine particle slurry, (4) adding a water-soluble compound of aluminum salt to said fine particle slurry, (5) neutralizing the slurry to coat TiO_2 surface with hydrous oxide of aluminum, (6) removing byproducts, adjusting the pH of the slurry, filtering the slurry and **washing an obtained cake with pure water**, (7) drying a washed cake, and (8) milling the dried cake with a jet mill or the like. Takagi at column 22, line 56 to column 23, line 2 (emphasis added).

However, Takagi is silent about the amount of alkali metal cations and alkaline-earth metal cations that can be extracted from the coated titanium dioxide particles, and is silent about washing titanium dioxide particles more than once. Takagi fails to suggest washing coated titanium dioxide particles sufficiently to reduce the amount of alkali metal cations and alkaline-earth metal cations that can be extracted from the coated titanium dioxide particles to water to a total amount of 120 mass ppm or lower.

Thus, the limitation of independent Claims 1 and 11 that "the coated titanium oxide particles contain alkali metal cations that can be extracted to water and alkaline-earth metal cations that can be extracted to water in a total amount of 120 mass ppm or lower" is not inherent (i.e., necessarily present) in Takagi.

Because Takagi fails to suggest all the limitations of independent Claims 1 and 11, the rejections over Takagi should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon

Corwin P. Umbach, Ph.D.
Registration No. 40,211